

Chapter -10-
Vinyl Heads Have Drugged Me.



Sometime in January 1981 Tommy Jay and Chris Brown moved into a half double house on Weber Road in the Clintonville area of Columbus Ohio. This was slightly before the painter **Jean-Michel Basquiat** broke on to the NYC art scene. Maybe just before **The General** had relocated to Florida. I had just completed my Major Morgan object experiments (see ¼ Tape Reel # 25). Also I was asked to create a Flier for the Northend Community Center **Jan 17th 2nd Annual Nowhere Show** showcase. (See *The Offense Book Of Books Vol -1- Issue #6 pg seven three*) At that time, as far as I know there were only eleven OSU punk bands with records out: **Vertical Slit, Romantic Noise, The Buttons, Mike Rep and the Quotas, Screaming Urge, Human Switchboard and the Gangsters.** All of them embraced the new Do It Yourself philosophy. I am not sure if all of them were seeking to become professionals but it looked to me that they had placed their hats in the ring, so to speak.

One day I came home from work and found that all the locks on my Warwick Ave home had been strategically changed. There, in all its splendor was my stuff sitting in the driveway. WTF? *"Houston we have a problem"*! The mighty Squid-unit had been evicted from the bonds of economic matrimony! My wife had filed for divorce. She was fed up with me and my troubadour ways. Not to mention my party happy friends. Marrying a musician had been a horrible mistake for her. All that glitters is not gold and I turned out to be a total "turd". She had reconnected on the down low with her old high school "sweety pie". I didn't have a chance. So I hobbled and exited stage left. I took up residence in my sister's Parliament Ridge basement, underneath her foosball table. Lucifer had been cast down from a false heaven. When Tommy & Jim got wind of the story they felt sorry. A few days later Tom invited me out to Weber Road to watch **The Who's** concert for Kampuchea on "Qube" cable TV. But it took a few months to get my head functioning again. Thus, began endless years of court hearings which finally ended in 1994. *"The fucking you take any like the fucking you get"*. It seemed like every 10 weeks or so I was copping a wimp before some Judge who wanted to work me 18 hours days. For a while jail time was a possibility. Jim promised to *"bake a cake with a file in it"*. But once I found out that you really had to be a fuck up and not have a job, things straightened out.

I was working 40 hour a week thanks to my boss Bud who had been a Navy Chief. Old Bud knew the lay of the land. He had seen a lot combat in Vietnam and was not the kind of man you would want to fuck with. He knew how to handle politicians and generals. Bud made sure I held onto my job by driving me

to and from work. Bud became the father I never had. He kept me focused. If the Saigon brothel's pimps gave him any problems he would shit then bury it in their numerous flower pots just inside their booty stalls. He was a master at stealth. The local female pimps never saw it coming. After a few days all the prostitutes would be desperate to trace down the smell of Budman's wily secretions. *The pimps would say; "Budman is very bad for business"*. Bud told me the "Mama-sans" never figured it out. Old Bud had spent time in the brig for child support. He had three kids to support and basically turned over all his pay to the courts. After thirty years in the Navy he retired. Then he got hired by the City of Columbus to supervise Leah and I.

When Jim Shepard saw the bullshit he started to divert my attention towards art history. We began to study: *Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, Fernand Léger, Tristan Tzara, Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, Man Ray, Wassily Kandinsky, Marc Chagall, Larry Rivers, Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, and Andy Warhol*- just to name a very few. Then Jim turned me on to Alfred Jarry's play called "Ubu Roi" (1873-1907). That was big fun. We may not have had any money but the Columbus Library had rows upon rows of art books. I used to run across books with the photos cut out. I knew Jimbo was using them for his cut & paste projects.

By February of 1981 the lawyer bills and child support were consuming my paycheck. I couldn't buy a car. I had to sponge off my sister. I was renting her basement floor at that point. But at least I had a bedroll and a roof over my head. But it got very cold at night. Sissy didn't mind feeding me. My boss, Bud-Man, was very kind. He lived a few blocks from my sister and offered to drive me to and from work. I could still get to work which was a 40 mile round trip. Jim was supporting Roxanne and a small child. Actually, Jim was in worse shape than me. Jim would do day labor as a construction worker. But in the winter it was slim pickings. The only thing that kept us sane was the music, free weed and beer which our circle of friends generously provided in abundance. At that point I had decided that I wanted to create pop music in a non-musical format like **Brain Eno**. So a recording session at Weber Road was held with me, Stik Hoffman and Tommy Jay. "**Marriage Vows**" was a catharsis acknowledgment of my status quo. It ended up on my 1st New Age 45. One door closes behind you and another door opens before you.

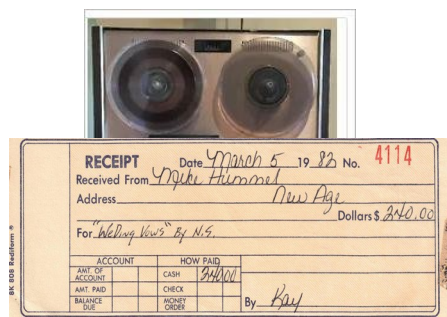


Suddenly Tommy Jay came across a Lo-Fi low cost synth keyboard solution: Casio's VL-1. Up until that point a cheap synth would run around 2,000-3,000 dollars. This unit cost about \$50 bucks. This meant that for Do It Yourself-ers a quantum leap in home recording had begun. Up until then synths had been

limited to the up scale professionals. Now we could explore the new realm that the band **Soft Cell**, with their 1981 hit version of "**Tainted Love**", had mapped out. Tommy Jay quickly mastered the VL-1 and it was off to the races. I was too broke to attend the 2nd annual Offense Reader's poll held at crazy mama's on February 10th 1981. But I remember Mike Rep raving on about the **13th Floor Elevators** and **Velvet Underground**. He gave me a mixed tape but I didn't understand what I was listening to. It took some time for me to figure it all out.



In late February 1981 Chuck Kubat asked me to print up some 45 sleeves for the "**Jet Boys**". Also, **Paul Volker** who I slightly knew from my "Trade Wind Band" days had become a painter of note around the OSU campus. He and Kubat began to publish "**Comic Relief**". It was a cartoon showcase for folks like him. During lunch time I would visit **Apollos** across the street. Louie would sell us gyros for a buck and then we would go to the record store and see what was happening. That March of 1981 **Tammy Boyer** moved into my sister's Parliament Ridge Apartment. She had just left her husband who was 20 years older. She was getting a divorce too. One day Jim Shepard called me and asked to meet at the Hot Dog venue called "Coney Island" which was near Neil Ave and High Street at that time. Back then the Short North was a slum area. When I was a kid most of the buildings were vacant and run down but the developers had seen an opportunity and slowly started to buy up buildings. That day as Jim and I sat eating our "coney" Jim began to lay out the framework to his book project called "**Drepez**". It was the story of a future slum artist who struggles to survive the abuses of his dystopian society from a "Dada" perspective. Jim had filled the story with his unique wit and humor. It ended with fleets of UFOs filling the skies of earth and thus ending the question: Are We Alone? Also, around this time my songwriting began to gel. Jim suggested I put "**Marriage Vows**" out as a 45 record. So I sold my Dokorder 4 track reel to reel deck to Tommy Jay and made plans for the New Age Record released. But it took about ten months before it was ready to distribute. Even Mike Rep and Tommy Jay kicked in a few bucks to complete my project. It was the first time anybody ever thought my work had any merit. On the flip side was my **Dorthy 1.2.3..** which features my daughter Jane Ann on vocal.



In May 1981 the Offense published Jim's *"Eulogy for Ian Curtis"* which I think Jim wanted to emulate. Even though Jim was a fantastic artist with a brilliant wit and sarcastic sense of humor, I could see the *"enemy within him"*. He used to tell me, "Squid, we all have our demons". Many years after his death I chose my "angel within" and never looked back. I don't know what we were together? Best I can figure it out we were like carrots and peas, salt and pepper, or ketchup and mustard. We fit together. We were the same. We took turns leading. We just inspired each other. Sometimes we followed the demon. Sometimes we followed the angel. And the music we left was a snapshot in my journey towards a greater understanding of this weird ass universe. We both clearly saw all the absurdities and paradoxes of middle America. We wanted nothing more to do with it. In 1981 there was the rich who controlled everything, especially the military and cops. Next came the spiritually ignorant middle class who were not aware of their wage slave status. And finally us freaks! And none of us *"cow-town punks"* fit in model. My clan held all of "them" with contempt. We were overdosing on the republican notion of middle America. Pay your taxes; fight the rich man's wars, let the media do your thinking by proxy. Fuck that!

Towards the end of May 1981 Tim Lafferty (Freight Train), Ted and Carla Lust, Mike Rep and I started to record some of our jam sessions on the weekends at Weber Road. This was around the time the **Razor Penguins, The Naked Skinnies and Twisted Shouts** (Ron House's project) began to lose steam. I don't think Tom's neighbors were none too pleased. And jamming was very rare at Weber Road when it occurred. By the end of May Shepard had asked me to record the **"Admission Of Guilt"** Felix Disk 45 that was to be included in the June 4th Tet Offense 1st anniversary Issue. (Book #8). **Phantom Limb** had been offered a major record deal with **Chrysalis Records**. During the sessions the band consisted of **Kurt Tuckerman** guitar, **Jim Sheridan** bass, **Mark Nathan** drums, **Jim Shepard** guitar and vocals and **Roxanne Newman** vocals. Later on Mark Nathan was replaced on drums by **Larry Altvater**. But during the **"Admission Of Guilt"** sessions relationships issues came to the fore and put a pause on the band. Years later Roxanne would complain to me that the rest of the band just walked away from the **Chrysalis Records** deal. *"No one wanted to do it"*. When I got to Kurt Tucker's house with my 4 track (soon to be sold) they didn't need it. Kurt had a 8 track ½ inch Teac. So I just sat around and offered a suggestion. *Why don't you use a backwards guitar Kurt?* He did and the rest was history.

That June of 1981 Tommy & Chris threw a **Rolling Stones** party on Weber Road. The Stones were live on QUBE cable. **Tom, Chris, Ted & Carla, Mike, Freight Train, Johnny Furnace** and I had a blast that night. A few days later Tom and Mike went to Apollo's to hear Ron House's new project called **"Moses Carryout"**. That's when Apollos became our go to hang out for a while. I think Jim also showed up. Increasingly Tommy and Chris were becoming unhappy with their Weber Road landlord. They began to think about moving out of town. Change was in the air. Everyone was making choices. Soon I moved into the **Dyke House** and Chuck Kubat became my landlord. My room was across from Lynn Cart. Downstairs the **Screaming Urge** rehearsed. Sometimes they would

let me jam with them. I shot some 8mm footage of a house party that featured **the Dyke House** crew. By this time the print shop had been moved to 90 East Main Street which meant I could take a bus to work if I got up by 6 am. After 6 months my boss was getting tired of driving me. So I settled into the dyke house culture and found myself spending a lot of time with **Max Flash, Arlus Stitch, Chris the Anarchists** and **Jim Shepard**. But little did I know why the downstairs toilets won't flush until one rainy day I took the lid off and low and behold found 2 pounds of pot stuff into the tank. *"There really was a god after all!"* I found out that Chris the Anarchist was using it to stash his inventory of weed which he was selling on the job. At the time Chris the Anarchist ran the parking lot for Crazy Moma's

During the week the **Blunt Stitches** and **Screaming Urge** rehearsed. Then Ron's new band, **Great Plains** took over the basement and I heard them all practice. For a while Kurt Tuckerman rented the room across from me and Lynn. He turned it into a recording studio. I am not sure if he recorded those bands but I would be very surprised if he didn't. In the attic of the house lived this 90 year old woman named Cora. She loved MD 20/20 wine and the only time I ever saw her was when she left her space to cop wine. On the other hand **Arlus Stitch** was a force of nature. The **Blunt Stitches** at that time had a three way love triangle going on between the girls. I never witnessed any of the fights but I heard that punches would get thrown around. Downstairs was the fire place; which Lynn Cart had turned into some kind of altar with candles, mirrors and other weird shit. Across from it there was a couch which Arlus freely and shamelessly exploited for sex. She would go to Crazy Moma's and pick up some boy or girl then fuck them all night long on the downstairs couch. I remember coming home late one Saturday night and she and some guy were going at it hard and heavy on the wooden floor. I got annoyed and said to her; *"Arlus get a room"*. She jumped up and yelled; *"Fine!"* She was a little piss about me making a comment. Like I was being rude or something. Then she throws a sheet over them and goes back to fucking his brains out like nothing happened. Arlus ended up becoming one of my "best friends". She had a heart of gold and the spirit of a sailor.

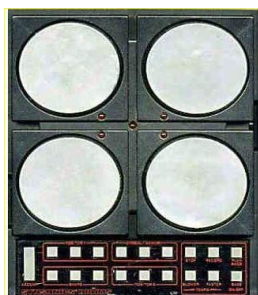
Generally everybody was respectful of my City Job. During the week the noise died out at 9 PM sharp. As far as I knew I was the only one with a full time gig. Some of them had part time jobs but most were unemployed. But on Friday and Saturday nights the Dyke House rocks out till 5 AM. There was only one way in and the solid metal door was cop proof! I think it was **Dave Green** and **Max Flash** who introduced me to **Greg Casey**. Greg was working on his master



degree in Psychology. He was destined to become a drug counselor for the State of Ohio. I had been messing around with my old room mate Tammy. She was my first romance during the divorce. Sometimes I would spend the night at my sister's trying to get Tammy to go all the way. We came close but we were afraid of our upcoming divorces. And I didn't want any of it dragged into court. After our divorces were final we did hook up in Nashville for a few weeks in July of 1983. But it only lasted a month. Her mother forced her to put an end to it. I was a bad seed!

By the end of July 1981 Mike Rep had left the record store and started to work at GO Coin programming jukeboxes. He seemed to be happy with it. Tommy and Chris ask me if I would take my 2 week vacation and house sit in their Weber Road apartment in November. They were planning to go to Jamaica so I agreed. That summer I spent most of my time hanging out with Jim and Roxanne doing table top recordings with a cheap GE stereo cassettes recorder and a Mattel SynSonics Drums Machine. Like Casio's VL-1 it made drum machines accessible for the Do It Yourself Movement. It had just hit the market and cost about \$100 dollars. Jim and Roxanne, I think, were still playing with **Phantom Limb** off and on. Mostly doing one-off shows every now and then. But it was clear to me that their band was coming to an end. About this time Leah began to become more hostile at the City of Columbus Republicans who ran the print shop. She had become a Union Steward and began to give my bosses shit. This put me in a terrible situation. I was going to have to choose between my feelings for her and my cash flow. Next thing I know she is filing union grievances left and right on my Republicans bosses. On top of this her epileptic fits were getting much worse. I was helpless when she had an episode. I worried she would bite off her tongue. She became more negative and hostile and for a while I was walking in eggs with her. On the other hand the moped had been a godsend which allowed me to travel round trip from the Dyke House to downtown. Then Leah started to "hang paper" on the director and the handwriting was on the wall. They were going to lay her off in September under the guise of budget cuts. This drove a wedge between us which broke my heart. Maybe it was wrong of me to put myself first.

The way I handled it all was unethical. I was in a helpless situation on the job. Then the day came and Bud fired her ass. *"Hit the road jack and don't ya coming back no more"*. For about a week she kept reporting to work but then was told she was risking jail time. She disappeared from my life and I never saw Leah again. It was hard being so close to someone then having them be ripped out of your life. It was a recurring cycle: My grandmother, father, uncles and aunts, mother, sister and wife. All of them got ripped out of my life. But you rise above it and move on. Last I heard she got hired by the State of Ohio and was working in the print shop at the State Office Tower.



That August of 1981 Tommy Jay and I did our **"Moving to Harrisburg"** session at Weber Road. By this time **Curt Schieber** and **Mark Moorman** had formed a booking agency and started to bring in some very cool out of town bands. When the last two weeks of August 1981 rolled around Tommy and Chris went on vacation. I was given the keys to the apartment at Weber Road. That Friday I drove my moped from downtown to Weber Road. When I entered the apartment I found about a quarter pound of weed and tons of beer. Weed. Beer. Yum! Things were looking up. Instantly I called Roxanne and Jim over for a recording session the next day. That night I turned on the cable and watched MTV for the very first time. Just two weeks before MTV had aired on August 1st 1981 in Columbus Ohio. I got totally shitfaced and passed out watching all these cool videos of bands. Most of the bands I had never seen in the record bins. The next day Jim and Roxanne woke me and we quickly got to work on pre-V3 recordings. Jim later used a few of the songs on his solo projects. Some of the songs were: **"The Laying Of Limbs"** by Jim/Rox/NS. On that song Roxanne sang and played organ. Jim plays bass and guitar. And I played drums and organ. Another song from those days was **"Cubist Dub"** which was me on drums and Jim on bass and guitar. It was a jam that Jim and I had worked up on the spot.

Then there was a knock at the back door. I thought *"Oh Shit they called the cops!"* but it turned out to be **Chris the Anarchistic**. So we recorded a poem that Chris wrote called **"Faustus"**. For the next two weeks I recorded and partied 8 hours a day. At night friends would stop by to watch MTV. I was in heaven. By the second week of my vacation **Ron House, Charles Wince** and I tried to form a three piece band. But I saw that having a place to rehearse at was going to be a major problem. So at that point I bowed out. Also, I was a little jealous of Ron who was obviously light-years ahead of me in songwriting. I was pretty stupid about music back then. It was so competitive and I was caught up in all the worthless bullshit over music. Before Chris & Tom were to fly home the heat when out. I woke up in the middle of the night with my breath steaming fog like vapors that lingered endlessly above my bedroll. I had frozen my ass off while sleeping. Then 4 days before Chris & Tom were to return, me and Anarchistic were in the kitchen. The stove burners were on high. It was colder than the arctic circle. We were trying to stay warm. I let the pipes drip so they would not bust. The beer had frozen up so we tried to smoke some hash. Then the kitchen ceiling came crashing down. Ka-Boom! Holy Shit! When Tom called

to let me know they were on their way I informed him about the heat and ceiling situation. He wasn't very happy. But it wasn't my fault. I didn't do anything to cause it. I spent the next 3 nights wrapped in an electric blanket watching MTV alone. However the hot water was still working so I could take a hot shower.

Also on August 27th 1981 The Tet Offense ran a review of **Carla Lust's** Strange Situation 45 which she had asked me to print the covers for. The 45 featured the song "**Strange Situation**" b/w "**Ride My Pony**". The review appeared in book # 11 along with a review of **The Naked Skinnies** "**All My Life**". Then the **Blunt Stitches** made the Offense cover the Tet Offense on Oct 15th 1981. This is when I started to shy away from the media. As a D.I.Y. artist I felt that most of the local artists were content to imitate rather than pioneer. There were exceptions like Ron House, Jim Shepard, Joy Division and Mike Rep. It seems to me that punk was more original than New Wave. To me New Wave was a rehash of the Op-art and Mod movements of the mid 1960's. New Wave was about dance and trying to get laid. There is a lot to be said about it, but it just wasn't what I needed. I think that is why I liked punk more. It rocked in a new way and I took notice. On the other hand, there were art bands like the **Highly Evolved Cosmic Beings** and **Human Switchboard**. By October of 1981 I was making trips all over Columbus on my moped. It was a very dangerous time for me. I'd get wasted then get on my moped and joy ride. **Mike Rep** had given me tapes of **Captain Beefheart** and **The 13 Floor Elevators (The Evil One)** for my travels. Also, Stik, Shepard and Tommy Jay turned me on to many other cool bands. I used to park my moped inside the Dyke House. I had a rain poncho with a Mickey Mouse logo on the back. So I looked a lot like "Jimmy" from the Quadrophenia movie on my moped. When I was on the job at 90 East Main Street I would park it in the print shop or on the loading dock. One Saturday afternoon I packed up my Walkman and headed out to Westland Mall to party with Stik Hoffman. When I got to Stik Hoffman's place we started to jam. Then Stik & I did a line of coke and walked over to the video arcade to hang out. All the West Side High School girls would flock to the mall on Saturday afternoons. By the time we got to the Westland video arcade it was packed to the brim with girls. So Stik and I began to socialize with them. But I made the mistake of hitting on the wrong babe. She was hot! But she was with the gang leader. I didn't know that. Next thing I know about 15 punks with clubs and knives jumped us and sucker punched Stik in his jaw. Coming from Fly-town I was a little quicker. I knew the drill. Stik always blames me for standing up to them. He tried to talk them down. He made excuses for my behavior. That's when he got sucker punched. POW! Back during my Hubbard Ave school days I knew that if I sucker punched the leader and kicked him in the ball his followers would scatter. I had learned that 1st ave lesson very well. But after Stik got punched we ran for fear of our lives. They chased us for blocks then gave up. Thank god! It was all my fault that Stik got punched. I was a little too cocky for love and didn't study the situation thoroughly. I thought I could just talk shit and get the bufu. Wrong girl, wrong boyfriend, wrong place.

By November of 1981 Cora was becoming a real problem at the Dyke House. I would get up and get ready for work and there would be streams of shit up and

down the hallway leading to the 2nd floor restroom. There was shit on the walls, the shower stall, and all over the toilet and light fixtures. *"How in the hell did that old lady manage to shit on the light bulbs I wonder?"* A true mystery. Cora's drinking made her extremely incontinent. To make matters worse there was a huge hole in the roof over the shower stall. It would snow or rain on you as you were getting ready for work. On the plus side you could see the stars at night if you had to pee. I liked that part. It reminded me of the farm. But for the longest time I would clean up the "shit" just enough to get ready for work. Then one day I bitched to Chuck Kubat about the shit problem. Next day Chuck calls Senior Services and they expedite old Cora's ass to a group home. The old bag got evicted from the Dyke House. No small feat. You really had to fuck up to get evicted from the Dyke House. And shitting on the group Frigidaire will do it! That's where we kept the beer. Don't shit on the Frigid people! However, the straw that broke the camel's back was when someone in the Dyke House figured out how to override the 50 degree lockout Chuck had put on the heat. For the longest time I used a small space heater but when Chuck turned off the heat at the tap it became impossible for me to hold my job and live there.

So around Thanksgiving 1981 I moved back in with Tammy and Sissy out in Reynoldsburg. They were happy to have me back. But I was trying to make sense of my crazy life. I was looking for the meaning to it all. Some of us found it. It is around this time that **Ted Lust** started his "**Arica**" training. I saw a big change in Ted after his training. He wasn't aimless anymore. He had purpose and focus. So Tammy and I also started our search for that too. She had replaced Leah Peoples as the main female in my life. I'd signed up to do a soup kitchen that Xmas at the homeless mission. I dressed up as Santa Clause and passed out meals to the homeless. It was there that one of the staff turned me on to the "**est**" training. That's when me and Tammy became interested in "est". During this time Ted Lust was also seeking something. **Oscar Ichazo** was a Bolivian who created "Arica". Ted completed his training. I was impressed with the changes Ted had made. So Tammy and I signed up for the Est Training. **Werner Erhard** was an American who created "est". In the realm of Psychology Ichazo and Erhard were able to monetize the soul-personality relationship. They had invented a new self-help business model based on the Ancient Wisdom which can be found in the Sanskrit texts of Tibet and Northern India.

So Tammy and I saddled up and headed to Detroit for a two day group training session. On the drive to Detroit Tammy, me and two other women got to know each other. In the car was this young beautiful Jewish OSU student. Her and I sat in the back seats. Under the radar she began to Hanky Panky me. I was shocked but very pleased. Sex had been off limits with Tammy until our divorces were done. But the other two girls both were interested in me. A Drunkard's dream if I ever did see one! Both had just bailed out on their relationships. In a stealthy way the OSU student had invited me into her lust. Everyone was trying to keep the sex vibe on the down low. But the shit was spilling all over squidly. That weekend at the hotel I shared the bed with Tammy while the two girls shared a bed. But on Sunday at lunch time the OSU student took me under the radar back to our room and fucked me really hard. We even fell off the bed and on to the

floor. *"The "est" training was worth every penny folks! God Bless Werner Erhard!"* We kept going at it laughing our brains out. Soon our hour lunch break was over. Then we hurried back to the group with none the wiser. Nobody suspected a thing.

When I got back to Columbus Jim had set up a December 21st **Phantom Limb** show at Mr. Browns. I didn't have the money and the moped didn't work right in snow so I just hunker down and wait for spring. Looking back on 1981 I would say that I crossed the Rubicon. There was no going back to that insecure child who couldn't say no to others; who sacrificed self interest for social acceptance. There was no going back to that low self-esteem that kept me away from group involvements. My inferiority complex was slowly giving way to a gradual building up of self respect. I was still an outsider but now I had a vision of my future. Now I knew I had to follow my muse to its' bitter but happy end. This was a soul sanction necessity. Tammy, like so many others in my life, had opened a new musical door. Up until her I totally rejected country music. But Nashville was waiting in the wings ready to teach me the basics of my craft. In 1982 the vision would become much clearer. I knew I couldn't depend upon others to do my art. Everyone was struggling with their own art. They had no time for me. I knew I had to become a self contained unit. A Squid-unit if you will! And so the "Do It Yourself" notion began to morph within me. I was becoming a **Squid Unit**. I was on the road of self discovery. Some mighty force was nudging me along my path. Accept it, it's all in the stars. Roll another number Ted for my head! Thanks bro...